



NEW ZEALAND QUALIFICATIONS FRAMEWORK
TE TAURA HERE TOHU MĀTAURANGA O AOTEAROA

Guidelines for approval of qualifications at levels 1-6 for listing on the New Zealand Qualifications Framework

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NZQA
125 The Terrace
PO Box 160
Wellington

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Introduction

This document sets out the requirements and describes how a decision will be reached to approve an application for a qualification to be listed at levels 1-6 on the New Zealand Qualifications Framework (NZQF). It is intended to be used by both qualification developers and quality assurance body analysts.

The document should be read in conjunction with the *Requirements for listing and maintaining qualifications on the NZQF* which can be found at <http://www.nzqa.govt.nz/assets/Studying-in-NZ/New-Zealand-Qualification-Framework/requirements-nzqf.pdf>

The document is divided into the following 4 sections:

Section 1: Approval of qualifications – principles and concepts

- The New Zealand Qualifications Framework
- Principles and concepts underpinning qualifications at levels 1-6 on the NZQF
- Evaluative approach

Section 2: Meeting the requirements for a qualification at levels 1-6 to be approved and listed on the NZQF

- Approval to develop a qualification
- Approval of a qualification
- Meeting the listing requirements
 - Qualification title
 - Qualification type, level, credits and NZSCED
 - Qualification developer
 - Strategic Purpose Statement
 - Outcome Statement
 - Award of the qualification
 - Period of review
 - Specification
 - Stakeholder involvement and support

Section 3: Assessment of applications

- Using evaluative methods to make decisions to approve qualifications for listing on the NZQF
- Reaching a decision to approve a qualification

Section 4: Glossary

Section 1: Approval of qualifications – principles and concepts

The New Zealand Qualifications Framework

The New Zealand Qualifications Framework (NZQF) is designed to optimise the recognition of educational achievement and its contribution to New Zealand's economic, social and cultural success.

Hence the NZQF will list qualifications that:

- convey the skills, knowledge and attributes a graduate has gained through completing a qualification
- require the development of integrated and coherent qualifications
- enable and support the provision of high-quality education pathways
- enhance confidence in the quality and international comparability of New Zealand qualifications
- contribute to the strengthening of Māori as a people by enhancing and advancing mātauranga Māori
- represent value for money, be sustainable and robust

Principles and concepts underpinning qualifications listed at levels 1-6 on the NZQF

The following principles underpin the design of qualifications:

Strategic and needs based

The usefulness, relevance and value of the qualification is based on its relationship to the needs of learners, employers, industry and communities. These needs must be readily demonstrated.

The qualification explicitly acknowledges the cultural and social aspirations of Māori, Pasifika and/or other identified communities, where this is appropriate.

Focused on outcomes

Clear specification of outcomes makes the purpose of the qualification transparent, enables comparisons with other qualifications (both nationally and internationally) and increases portability of the qualification internationally.

Clear outcomes make the pathways for graduates to further education, employment and/or a contribution to their community, more explicit.

Evaluative quality assurance emphasises the achievement of outcomes relevant to the needs and aspirations of significant stakeholders, particularly learners. NZQA uses an evaluative approach in the quality assurance of qualifications and programmes.

Flexibility

The qualification is achievable in different contexts.

A range of programmes of training or study can lead to the qualification and allow achievement of the qualification in ways most suited to learners' educational, work or cultural needs and aspirations.

Trust and accountability

Evaluative approaches to quality assurance operate in an environment of mutual trust and accountability throughout the tertiary sector. The relationship between government agencies and tertiary education organisations (TEOs) is based on good communication and collaboration, where the default expectation is that both parties can rely on the integrity of the processes used and the information provided.

Evaluative approach

The evaluative approach to quality assurance will be used by NZQA to assess applications for approval to develop a qualification and for approval and listing of a qualification.

The evaluative approach seeks answers to high level questions about the value of the intended outcomes¹ of a qualification. It guides evaluation of both the big picture purpose and relevance of the qualification, as well as the more specific requirements for approving and listing qualifications on the NZQF. This is achieved through the use of a combination of high level 'key evaluation questions' (KEQs) underpinned by more specific 'enquiry questions' which enable the KEQs to be answered.

KEQs are open-ended questions that direct an enquiry into the quality, value or importance of outcomes and key processes contributing to them. Any application to list a qualification on the NZQF will be expected to provide the evidence used to answer KEQs.

Key evaluation questions

The KEQs, which cover both the process of the application and the output of that process, the qualification itself, are:

1. To what extent is the application, and the underlying process for a qualification to be approved, complete and robust?
2. How well does the qualification's strategic purpose match the needs of identified and relevant stakeholders?
3. To what extent will the qualification enable graduates to pursue intended educational, employment and community outcomes?
4. To what extent have relevant stakeholders influenced/contributed to the qualification design?

The decision to approve and list a qualification on the NZQF will be based on an evaluative assessment of the credibility, relevance and adequacy of the information and evidence provided by qualification developers. This will ensure that the logic of the evaluative decision (approved / not approved) is transparent to all parties and is based on how well the application for a qualification to be approved, and the qualification itself, address the specified requirements.

¹ The tertiary evaluation indicators, developed as an integral component of evaluative quality assurance, set out important outcomes and key contributing processes in tertiary education. The indicators, especially the outcome indicators, are likely to be useful for developers in the pre-development stage of qualification design and development.

The following table links the KEQs, relevant enquiry questions and the requirements for listing a qualification at levels 1-6 on the NZQF.

KEY EVALUATION QUESTIONS	ENQUIRY QUESTIONS	LISTING REQUIREMENTS
<p>To what extent is the application, and the underlying process for a qualification to be approved, complete and robust?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What similar qualifications exist, and how, specifically, is this qualification differentiated from them? • How well do the qualification title, type, level and credits reflect the qualification's strategic purpose and outcomes? • How clearly do the criteria specify how the qualification can be awarded, including definition of awarding bodies? • To what extent can the critical statements of the graduate profile be assessed to enable moderation between programmes leading to the qualification? • What specific provisions are made in the qualification to allow it to be achieved in different cultural and delivery contexts? • How frequently will the qualification need to be reviewed to ensure its ongoing usefulness and relevance? • To what extent are the mandatory and optional conditions specified appropriate for the strategic purpose and outcome statement? 	<p>LR 3-10 and 13-18</p>
<p>How well does the qualification's strategic purpose match the needs of relevant stakeholders?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How well have stakeholder (learner, employer, industry, community) needs been incorporated into the qualification design? • To what extent does the needs analysis identify the cultural and social aspirations of Māori and Pasifika, and how well are these reflected in the purpose of the qualification? • To what extent does the evidence provided confirm a valid need for the qualification? 	<p>LR11</p>
<p>To what extent will the qualification enable graduates to pursue intended educational, employment and community outcomes?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How well do the specified the outcomes reflect the strategic purpose of the qualification? • To what extent is the graduate profile appropriate to the designated level of the qualification? • To what extent are the outcomes substantially different from those of other qualifications listed on the NZQF? 	<p>LR 12</p>
<p>To what extent have relevant stakeholders influenced/contributed to the qualification design?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To what extent does the stakeholder profile ensure appropriate and comprehensive stakeholder involvement at a national level? • To what extent is the stakeholder contribution representative and appropriate for their groups and/or communities? • How well have stakeholders' comments, feedback and interests been incorporated in the development of an outcome statement and strategic purpose statement? 	<p>LR 19-21</p>

Section 2: Meeting the requirements for a qualification at levels 1-6 to be approved and listed on the NZQF

In order for a qualification at levels 1 to 6 to be approved by NZQA and listed on the NZQF, it must first meet a defined set of listing requirements. These requirements are set out in NZQA's *Requirements for listing and maintaining qualifications on the NZQF* document².

The purpose of this section is to provide qualification developers and quality assurance body analysts with information and guidance about how to meet the requirements for a qualification at level 1-6 to be approved for listing on the NZQF.

The development of qualifications and their subsequent listing on the NZQF involves two distinct application and approval stages:

- approval to develop a qualification
- approval to list a qualification

The first stage involves applying to NZQA for approval to proceed to develop a qualification. This stage is intended to ensure that all new qualifications are relevant and do not duplicate existing NZQF qualifications.

The second stage occurs once the qualification has been developed and involves applying to NZQA for approval of that qualification. Once approved, the qualification is listed on the NZQF.

Approval to develop a qualification

Applications for approval to develop a qualification must include the following information and evidence:

- Qualification title, type, level and credit value
- New Zealand Standard Classification of Education (NZSCED) code (it may also include the Directory of Assessment Standards classification)
- A statement of strategic purpose
- A qualification outcome statement (including graduate profile, and education and employment pathways)
- Identification of any duplication with existing qualifications on the NZQF
- Explanation of need for qualification and evidence of confirmation of need
- The Stakeholder Profile for the qualification
- Description of stakeholder involvement and evidence of support
- Name and legal status of the qualification developer

The process and templates for submitting applications to NZQA can be found on the NZQF page of the NZQA website.

² For degree and degree-related qualifications, refer to the Approval and Accreditation of Courses Leading to Degrees and Related Qualifications 2010 <http://www.nzqa.govt.nz/assets/Providers-and-partners/Registration-and-accreditation/degrees-app-acc.pdf>

Approval of a qualification

Applications for approval of a qualification must include the following information and evidence:

- Name and legal status of the qualification developer
- Qualification title, type, level and credit value
- New Zealand Standard Classification of Education (NZSCED) code (it may also include the Directory of Assessment Standards classification)
- A statement of strategic purpose
- A qualification outcome statement
- Details on the award of the qualification
- Period for review
- A specification which contains mandatory and optional conditions for programmes leading to the award of the qualification
- The Stakeholder Profile for the qualification
- Description of stakeholder involvement in developing the qualification and evidence of support
- Explanation for any changes to the Strategic Purpose Statement and/or graduate profile subsequent to Approval to Develop.

The process and templates for submitting applications to NZQA can be found on the NZQF page of the NZQA website.

Meeting the listing requirements

The following section considers each of the requirements for listing a qualification on the NZQF in relation to both stages of the process to approve a qualification at levels 1-6 for listing on the NZQF. It outlines and provides guidance on the information and/or evidence that must be included in the application to enable the decision for approval to be made.

Other relevant resources include:

Document/resource	Website location
Requirements for listing and maintaining qualifications on the NZQF	http://www.nzqa.govt.nz/assets/Studying-in-NZ/New-Zealand-Qualification-Framework/requirements-nzqf.pdf
New Zealand Standard Classification of Education (NZSCED)	http://www.educationcounts.govt.nz/technical_info/code_sets/new_zealand_standard_classification_of_education_nzsced
Directory of Assessment Standards classification (DAS)	http://www.nzqa.govt.nz/framework/explore/index.do
New Zealand Qualifications Framework search	http://www.nzqa.govt.nz/nzqf/search/results.do
NZQA policy on credit recognition and transfer	www.nzqa.govt.nz/assets/studying-in-NZ/Tertiary/creditpolicy.pdf

QUALIFICATION TITLE

Listing Requirements

LR3: A qualification listed on the NZQF must have a title where the generic stem of the title begins with the legally protected term 'New Zealand', followed by its qualification type, and is completed by a designator which identifies its main discipline or subject field. The title may include other qualifiers, such as optional discipline, level and focus qualifiers.

LR4: Qualification titles may include strands that recognise achievement of specialities.

LR5: Names of trademarked products, training and assessment material, tertiary education organisations, or commercial organisations are not permissible terms within the title.

Information for inclusion in the application

The application must include a qualification title that:

- meets the above listing requirements
- provides a concise, accurate and informative indication of the purpose of the qualification.

Guidance

1 A qualification title at levels 1-6 must begin with the term "New Zealand", followed by a qualification type, a designator and if required, a qualifier. It must end with the level of the qualification written in brackets.

2 **Designators** should identify the main disciplinary emphasis of the qualification and:

- have wide national or international acceptability, or
- be necessary for national or international recognition of that qualification, or
- be a requirement of a professional body that has a formal role in the approval of the qualification and
- where possible, relate to the relevant New Zealand Standard Classification of Education (NZSCED) classification

Examples: *New Zealand Certificate in Computing (Level 4)*
New Zealand Diploma in Electronics (Level 5)

3 **Qualifiers** may be added to the title of the qualification if this improves general understanding of the qualification. Qualifiers must be placed after the qualification designator (or qualification type in some cases).

Examples: *New Zealand Certificate in Computing (Software) (Level 4)*
New Zealand Diploma in Electronics (Advanced) (Level 5)

Guidance (continued)

- 4 There are three types of **qualifiers** that may be added to the qualification title after the designator. For the purposes of consistency and clarity, qualifiers should be written in brackets.

Qualifiers	Description	Example(s)
Discipline	May be added to indicate that the qualification has a tighter focus on a sub-field within the discipline.	New Zealand Diploma in Design (<u>Computer Graphics</u>) (Level 6)
Strand	Must be added where there are one or more strands or specialities within a qualification.	New Zealand Certificate in Signmaking (<u>with strands in Computer Graphics, Hand Lettering, and Electric Signmaking</u>) (Level 4)
Focus	May be added to indicate a particular focus of a qualification, e.g. 'Applied', 'Advanced', 'Intermediate' or 'Introductory'.	New Zealand Certificate in English (<u>Introductory</u>) (Level 2) New Zealand Diploma in Electronics (<u>Advanced</u>) (Level 6)

- 5 The use of qualifiers (e.g. 'Advanced', 'Intermediate', 'Applied') is limited to the designator of the qualification, not to the qualification itself.

Examples: A *New Zealand Diploma in Aviation (Advanced) (Level 5)* is a valid name for a qualification

An *Advanced New Zealand Diploma in Aviation (Level 5)* is **not** valid.

- 6 Approved qualifications are listed on the NZQF and as such are publically available. This means that any tertiary education provider or industry training organisation may be able to develop a programme that leads to a listed qualification.
- 7 Intellectual property rests with programmes leading to a listed qualification, not the qualification itself. Therefore, the names of trademarked products, organisations etc are not permissible terms within a qualification title.

QUALIFICATION TYPE, LEVEL, CREDITS AND NZSCED

Listing Requirements

- LR6: Specify the qualification type in accordance with the relevant qualification type definition.
- LR7: Specify the level on the NZQF of the qualification in accordance with the relevant level descriptor.
- LR8: Specify the number of credits required to complete the qualification where one credit is equivalent to 10 hours notional learning.
- LR9: Assign a 6-digit NZSCED code.

Information for inclusion in the application

The application must specify:

- qualification type, level and credits that:
 - meet the above listing requirements
 - are appropriate for the qualification's strategic purpose and outcomes.
- the six digit New Zealand Standard Classification of Education (NZSCED) code that represents the qualification's primary focus.

Guidance

- 1 Specific guidance on determining the most appropriate type, level and credit value for a qualification is provided in the *Requirements for listing and maintaining qualifications on the New Zealand Qualifications Framework*. The document sets out qualification types for the NZQF, level descriptors and further explains what is included in notional learning.

Level

- 2 The qualification must be assigned one of the levels on the NZQF. The level assigned must provide a best match between the level descriptors and the outcomes of the qualification.
- 3 In cases where a qualification includes strands, each strand must be at the same level as the qualification.

Credits

- 4 It must also be assigned a credit value that reflects the notional learning time it is expected to take the learner to meet all of the outcomes of the qualification. One credit represents a notional 10 hours of learning time.
- 5 In cases where a qualification includes strands, each strand must be assigned its own credit value. The qualification's credit value must then be a 'range' which allows for the variation in credit values for each strand.

Example: *New Zealand Certificate in Agriculture (with strands in Arable Farming, Cattle Farming, Dairy Farming, Deer Farming, and Sheep Farming) (Level 4)*
Level 4 Credit range: 83-95
- 6 Indicative credit values are assigned to each outcome in the graduate profile of the qualification. The total of these values must equal the credit value for the qualification.

Guidance (continued)

New Zealand Standard Classification of Education (NZSCED)

- 7 The primary focus of the qualification will determine the six digit NZSCED classification.

Example: 100701 Audio Visual Studies

- 8 Qualification developers may also choose to include the relevant Directory of Assessment Standards' (DAS) field, subfield, or domain. This classification indicates how the qualification relates to assessment standards on the DAS.

Example: Manufacturing > Composites > Industrial Composites
(Field) (Subfield) (Domain)

QUALIFICATION DEVELOPER

Listing requirement

LR10: A qualification must be developed by an organisation that NZQA accepts as a legal entity.

Information for inclusion in the application

The application must demonstrate that the qualification developer is able to undertake the prescribed functions and responsibilities.

Guidance

- 1 Organisations wishing to list qualifications on the NZQF at levels 1-6, must be capable of meeting all the functions and responsibilities of a qualification developer.
- 2 Where there is a group of organisations collaborating in the development of a single qualification, the group needs to either:
 - nominate one of the organisations body corporate to undertake the functions and responsibilities of the qualification developer, or
 - establish a body corporate to undertake the functions and responsibilities of the qualification developer.

Responsibilities

- 3 In relation to the qualifications they develop, the qualification developer is responsible for:
 - meeting the listing requirements as set out in this document
 - reviewing the qualifications within the approved review period and in accordance with NZQA guidelines
 - monitoring and reporting on the consistency of qualification achievement in accordance with the approved arrangements specified in each qualification.

STATEMENT OF STRATEGIC PURPOSE

Listing requirements

LR11: The statement of strategic purpose clearly states the qualification's use and relevance to learners, industry and the communities. It is developed from identification of the need for the qualification and must demonstrate the qualification is substantially different from other qualifications listed on the NZQF.

Information for inclusion in the application

The application must include:

- a strategic purpose statement that meets the above listing requirement
- an explanation of the strategic need or gap the qualification will fill on the NZQF
- an explanation and justification for the proposed new qualification where substantial similarities to current qualifications on the NZQF have been identified
- credible, valid and adequate evidence that confirms sufficient need for the new qualification³, including evidence of stakeholder support.

Guidance

Strategic Purpose Statement

- 1 A strategic purpose statement identifies why the qualification should be on the NZQF. It must clearly identify the:
 - target group of learners
 - industry and/or community that will benefit from the qualification
 - the standard at which the graduate will operate, within a defined scope of practice.

Example: *New Zealand Certificate in Brick and Blocklaying (Pre-Trade) (Level 2)*

The purpose of this qualification is to provide the brick and blocklaying sector with individuals who have attained sufficient knowledge, practical skills and attitudes to enter into an apprenticeship or employment. Graduates will be capable of operating at a novice level with substantial supervision required.

- 2 The statement should also acknowledge the cultural and social aspirations of Māori, Pasifika and other communities, where these are reflected in the needs analysis.
- 3 The application seeking approval to develop a qualification will need to identify the key stakeholders involved in the development of the Strategic Purpose Statement and the nature of that involvement.

Similarities to other qualifications on the NZQF

- 4 An investigation of the NZQF is required prior to seeking approval to develop a qualification, to identify any existing qualifications that are substantially similar to the proposed new qualification.

³ In some cases, the need for a new qualification may be the result of new or revised regulatory or governmental requirements. This justification must be included in the application.

Guidance (continued)

- 5 Qualifications will be considered as substantially similar if they have:
 - similar graduate profiles or a common core of outcomes and/or
 - similar employment pathways.
- 6 A copy of each qualification that is determined to be substantially similar, must be attached to the application seeking approval to develop a qualification, along with a clear explanation and justification for the new qualification.
- 7 Where the new qualification is intended to consolidate and replace a number of substantially similar qualifications existing (listed) on the NZQF, the identification of collaborative relationships and an explanation of the resulting benefits should be included.

Confirmation of need

- 8 Confirmation of need for a new qualification will include the following distinct components:
 - **Needs analysis** – a comprehensive investigation and analysis to quantify need in terms of both supply and demand, identify gaps, and any potential strategic benefits
 - **Consultation with mandatory⁴ and other stakeholders** – consultation to confirm need and strategic fit, sufficiency of demand and potential life span of the new qualification.
- 9 The results of the analysis and consultation must be included in the form of a report as evidence in the application. The report should include (as a minimum) the scope, methodology and findings for the exercise and will be expected to confirm sufficient supply of learners and demand from end users, e.g. employers and communities.

⁴ Means all or any of the following: industry training organisations with gazetted coverage, other standard setting bodies, and/or regulatory bodies; education providers who are currently (or may potentially be) delivering programmes leading to the award of the qualification. Where there is not a standard setting body, stakeholders must include relevant community, industry, employer or professional groups

OUTCOME STATEMENT

Listing requirement

LR12: The qualification clearly and concisely states information about its outcomes. It contains a graduate profile that clearly describes the skills, knowledge and application within outcome statements and expected education and employment pathways or contribution to the community resulting from achievement of the qualification.

Information for inclusion in the application

The application must include an outcome statement that:

- meets the above listing requirements
- includes indicative credit values for each outcome.

Guidance

1 A qualification outcome statement:

- explains clearly to prospective learners, whānau, employers and other educational organisations what the graduate is expected to be able to do, know and understand as a result of the learning
- describes the range of functions and/or scope of practice the graduate of the qualification is able to perform
- needs to be sufficiently comprehensive to enable comparisons between individual qualifications on the NZQF
- has 3 components:
 - a graduate profile
 - an education pathway
 - an employment pathway.

2 The **graduate profile** outlines the capabilities of the graduate as a result of achieving the specified programme of study or training leading to the award of a qualification. It defines the minimum level of skills, knowledge, understanding and attributes a graduate awarded the qualification can demonstrate.

3 **Outcomes** within the graduate profile must:

- describe the performance of the graduate in relation to the designated level of the qualification awarded (e.g. the outcomes of a level 4 certificate must align with the definition and characteristics of a graduate of a level 4 certificate)
- specify the key capabilities the graduate will have as a result of the programme of study or training (i.e. what the graduate will 'do and know and understand')
- specify requirements for eligibility for licensing or professional registration and any critical practice or employment elements
- use descriptors that reflect the level of the qualification – this assists in demonstrating progression and the level of performance expected of the graduate
- be allocated an indicative credit value, the total of which must equal the qualification credit value
- appropriately reflect the range of skills, knowledge and attributes applicable to the particular programme of study or training.

Guidance (continued)

Example – New Zealand Certificate in Fitness (Level 5)

A graduate of this qualification will be able to:

- *Apply effective interpersonal skills and communicate effectively in group and one-on-one situations*
- *Critically analyse exercise fitness information from an informed, knowledgeable base of anatomy, physiology, fitness training and physical assessment protocols*
- *Plan and implement fitness and lifestyle plans for a wide range of clients with knowledge of training systems, nutritional needs and performance psychology*
- *Maintain personal and group safety within a fitness context*
- *Be an effective and ethical contributing member of both a staff team and the wider fitness community*
- *Pursue degree level studies*
- *Meet the requirements of Fitness NZ to be registered as a Personal Trainer.*

4 Where the qualification includes strands, specific outcomes for each strand must be clearly identified within the graduate profile.

5 The **education pathway** outlines the further education pathways a graduate of the qualification can undertake. For example, a certificate can be the first step on a pathway that leads through diploma to a bachelor's degree.

6 There are some general qualifications where the educational pathway may only be broadly defined because it will depend on the learners' own preferences and appropriate achievement. However, a minimum expectation is that any one level of qualification should prepare the graduate to undertake study at the next NZQF level.

Example - *New Zealand Diploma in Surveying (Level 6)*

This diploma can lead to a Bachelor of Surveying and builds on from the New Zealand Certificate in Surveying (Level 4).

Example - *New Zealand Diploma in Avalanche Studies (Level 6)*

This diploma builds on from the New Zealand Certificate in Avalanche Safety Management and Snowsport Instructing (Level 3) as well as the New Zealand Certificate in Ski Patrol (Level 4).

The diploma has no further direct educational pathways in New Zealand in relation to avalanche studies. However further study can be undertaken in snow sports (guiding and ski area operations), research, rescue and avalanche safety.

7 The **employment pathway** identifies the areas in which a graduate may be qualified to work, or the contribution they may make to their community.

Example – *New Zealand Certificate in Applied Electronics Technology (Level 3)*

Holders of this certificate may be qualified to work as apprentices and trainee technicians, or in similar entry-level technical roles in all sectors of the electrical, electronics, telecommunications and aircraft avionics industries.

Example – *New Zealand Certificate in Hauora (Māori Health) (Level 4)*

Holders of this certificate will have the skills and knowledge required to assist people by providing them with Hauora services delivered by health providers, Māori health providers, mainstream health services, institutions, marae, community centres and local clinics.

8 For general qualifications it may not be possible to suggest a logical employment pathway because this will depend on the learners' own preferences. If this is the case, it must be noted in the application.

AWARD OF THE QUALIFICATION

Listing requirements

LR13: NZQF qualifications at levels 1 to 6 may be awarded by NZQA, the qualification developer, the programme owner, the industry training organisation arranging training leading to the qualification in the industry for which it is recognised under section 5 of the Industry Training Act 1992; or by any education provider accredited under section 259 of the Education Act 1989 to deliver a programme leading to the qualification.

LR14: The formal document certifying the award of an NZQF qualification bears the NZQF logo, which indicates the qualification is a quality assured New Zealand qualification. It may also include the name or logo of the qualification developer and/or other awarding body.

Information for inclusion in the application

The application must specify the:

- bodies that may award the qualification (from the above listing requirement)
- minimum requirements for inclusion on the formal document certifying the award

Guidance

1 The qualification developer must specify the bodies that will be able to award the qualification. These bodies are drawn from the list set out in LR13:

- NZQA
- qualification developer
- owners of approved programmes leading to the qualification
- ITO that is arranging training leading to the qualification in the industry for which it is recognised
- education providers accredited to deliver a programme leading to the qualification

2 The formal certification document must include the minimum requirements set out below:

- qualification title
- NZQF reference number
- date of issue and/or award
- the bodies whose name or logo can appear on the formal certification document.

Example – *Qualification Developer*

Education providers accredited to deliver a programme leading to the qualification

PERIOD OF REVIEW

Listing requirement

LR15: The qualification must be regularly reviewed to maintain ongoing usefulness and relevance. The qualification developer specifies the period for the review, which must be no longer than five years after listing the qualification on the NZQF or the previous review.

Information for inclusion in the application

The application must specify the period for review of the qualification, in accordance with the above listing requirement.

Guidance

- 1 All qualifications on the NZQF must be reviewed periodically to ensure that they remain useful and relevant and continue to meet the needs of the learners, industry and stakeholders for which they were initially developed.
- 2 A review provides an opportunity for the qualification developer and relevant stakeholders to reassess the need for the qualification, to determine whether it is still fit-for-purpose.
- 3 The review period must be no longer than five years after listing the qualification on the NZQF or the previous review. Factors to be considered in determining the review period include the rate of change in the industry and the size of the qualification.
- 4 NZQA will use the review period to determine the date for review once the qualification is approved and include this date on the NZQF.

SPECIFICATION

Listing requirements

LR16: The qualification specification contains mandatory and optional conditions for programmes leading to the award of the qualification. The qualification must normally be able to be delivered in a range of contexts and achieved through a range of pathway.

LR17: Mandatory conditions include:

- quality assurance arrangements to ensure consistency of outcomes in the graduate profile
- arrangements for credit transfer and recognition of prior learning
- pre-requisites to meet regulatory body or legislative requirements such as for health and safety (where applicable)
- where applicable, critical standards from the Directory of Assessment Standards, or regulatory body or industry standards, mapped to outcomes in the graduate profile
- strands that provide for specialties, in addition to a common core of skills, knowledge and application (where applicable)
- the minimum standard of achievement and standards for grade endorsements such as merit or excellence (where applicable).

LR18: Optional conditions may include:

- entry requirements including pathways, minimum literacy level
- structure of the programme, including the sequence of critical standards or graduate profile outcomes
- the context for delivery or assessment
- other conditions such as the maximum time for completion and practicum.

Information for inclusion in the application

The application must include:

- a specification that meets the above listing requirements
- clear justification where the context for assessment of specific outcomes within the graduate profile is restricted.

Guidance

- 1 The **specification** is intended to provide guidance to educators and trainers in their interpretation of the qualification and development of programmes of study or training. This guidance should support good education and training practice and assessment.
- 2 Mandatory and optional conditions can be specified for the qualification as a whole, and for individual outcomes within the graduate profile.

Arrangements for monitoring consistency of outcomes

- 3 It is the qualification developers' responsibility to monitor the consistency of outcomes for learners across programmes leading to the qualification.
- 4 The arrangements should clearly outline how the developer plans to meet this responsibility, including the principles and goals underpinning the plan.

Guidance (continued)

5 The arrangements should also describe (at a high level):

- The qualification developer's planned approach, including frequency and methodology
- Evidential requirements
- The responsibilities of each party, e.g. qualification developer, programme owner and programme provider
- Data storage (audit trail) and reporting processes
- Responsibility for related costs

Credit transfer and recognition of prior learning arrangements

6 The NZQF provides a basis for credit recognition and transfer through use of a standard definition of credits, system of levels, and classification system for all qualifications quality assured in New Zealand.

7 Qualification design should promote and facilitate this recognition and transfer. There should be sufficient information in the Specification to enable programme developers to demonstrate a clear match between the outcomes within a qualification's graduate profile and the components of their programme of study or training.

8 Credit transfer will continue to be automatic where assessment standards are used for assessment within programmes of study or training leading to a qualification.

Standards from the Directory of Assessment Standards (DAS), or regulatory body or industry standards, mapped to outcomes in the graduate profile

9 Qualification developers (ITOs and other Standard Setting Bodies in particular) may choose to identify assessment standards that singly or together meet specific outcomes in the graduate profile, as mandatory or optional conditions.

10 Explanation and justification is required where specific assessment standards are determined to be critical and identified as mandatory conditions.

Minimum standard of achievement and standards for grade endorsements

11 The minimum standard required for award of the qualification will be the achievement of all of the outcomes in the graduate profile, including the outcomes for specific strands (as appropriate).

12 The standard may also include other requirements such as meeting regulatory body certification, practical application hours, or maximum time for completion of the qualification.

13 One grade is available for every qualification, i.e. Achieved. However, qualifications may also, if appropriate, include Merit and Excellence grades. Merit and Excellence grades should only be specified when there is a clearly articulated rationale for recognising differentiated performance.

14 The requirements and criteria for each grade should be described in to ensure clear differentiation between each.

Entry requirements

15 Entry requirements identified in the **specification** are intended to provide guidance for programme developers. They may include such things as:

- recommended literacy and numeracy levels for learners entering study or training towards the qualification
- lower level qualifications that learners should complete before entering study or training towards the qualification.

Guidance (continued)

Programme structure and context for delivery or assessment

- 16 The qualification developer should provide guidance for the programme developers where particular outcomes need to be achieved or assessed in a specific order or context.
- 17 For example:
 - in some industries, health and safety outcomes must be achieved before learners go into workplaces or onto worksites
 - in mātauranga Māori qualifications, some outcomes could be interwoven throughout the learning and assessment
 - assessment in a simulated environment may be appropriate for qualifications that are intended to produce work-ready graduates.

STAKEHOLDER INVOLVEMENT AND SUPPORT

Listing requirements

- LR19: Individuals and/or organisations with an interest or 'stake' in the outcome of the qualification must confirm the need at a national level for the qualification and participate in and endorse the qualification outcomes.
- LR20: Mandatory stakeholders include the industry training organisations with gazetted coverage, or other standard setting bodies, regulatory bodies, and the education providers who may or are currently delivering a programme leading to the qualification. Where there is not a standard setting body, stakeholders must include relevant community, industry, employer or professional groups.
- LR21: Where the qualification developer can show exceptional circumstances, NZQA may waive the requirements of LR19.

Information for inclusion in the application

The application must meet the above listing requirements, and specifically include:

- a stakeholder profile for the qualification
- **approval to develop a qualification** - a list of the stakeholders from the profile that had significant involvement in the pre development stage, and an explanation of the nature, degree and reason for their involvement
- **approval for the qualification and to list** - a list of the stakeholders from the profile that had significant involvement in the development of the qualification, and an explanation of the nature, degree and reason for their involvement
- evidence of identified stakeholder involvement and support.

Guidance

Stakeholder involvement and support

- 1 Stakeholder involvement and support confirms the need for the qualification and ensures it is useful, relevant and valuable to learners, industry and other communities.
- 2 Stakeholders must be appropriate, credible and representative of the relevant vocational, educational and societal communities, based on the:
 - outcome statement and strategic purpose statement
 - coverage and responsibility of ITOs and other Standard Setting Bodies
 - relevant legislative or regulatory requirements.
- 3 Stakeholders must also be recognised by their communities as having the relevant experience, knowledge and views to speak on their behalf.
- 4 Stakeholders must be involved in all or some of the following activities:
 - **approval to develop a qualification** - confirming the need for the qualification and providing input into the strategic purpose and outcome statements
 - **approval for the qualification and to list** - informing and supporting the development of the qualification, ensuring the structure and prescription align with the intended outcomes.
- 5 The nature and degree of involvement of a specific stakeholder will vary across the stages of qualification development but should always be appropriate for the qualification and the purpose for which the stakeholder was selected.

Guidance (continued)

- 6 The level, nature and reason for their involvement must be clearly described in both Applications.
- 7 Evidence of identified stakeholder involvement and support is also required, through:
 - completion of individual Attestation forms by key stakeholders (including mandatory stakeholders)
 - maintenance of an audit trail for stakeholder group consultation exercises, e.g. employer surveys or trainee workshops.

Stakeholder profile

- 8 A stakeholder profile is required for each new qualification. It must be established by the qualification developer prior to any pre development work being undertaken, and maintained throughout the development, listing and ongoing review cycle of the qualification.
- 9 A stakeholder profile lists the individuals, groups or organisations with an interest (or 'stake') in the outcome of the qualification. Each party's inclusion in the profile must be supported by an explanation of the extent to which they are appropriate, credible and representative.
- 10 Examples of where stakeholders may be drawn from include:
 - Employers
 - Learners (current and past trainees/apprentices)
 - Employees
 - Standard setting bodies, i.e. ITOs, NZQA's National Qualification Services and Māori Qualification Services and the Ministry of Education
 - Regulatory bodies, e.g. Nursing Council, Electrical Workers Registration Board
 - Industry and professional associations and/or societies
 - Communities of practice, e.g. IT specialist groups
 - TEOs i.e. ITPs, PTEs, Wānanga, Universities, Government Training Establishments
 - Secondary schools
 - National peak bodies
 - Local government
 - Unions
 - Community and cultural groups, e.g. church groups, sports clubs, ethnic organisations
 - Rūnanga and Iwi organisations
 - Whānau
 - Non-government organisations (NGOs), Not-for-profit organisations and the voluntary sector (including volunteers)
 - International qualification developers
 - Technical experts, e.g. manufacturers or suppliers (for technical expertise and future skill needs).

Withholding of support

- 11 Should the mandatory stakeholder(s) choose not to support the need for, or content of, the new qualification, they will need to provide a clear justification for their position. The application will also need to include an explanation of the reasons why the qualification developer is continuing without that support.
- 12 Where the qualification developer can show exceptional circumstances, NZQA may waive the requirement for stakeholders to confirm the need at a national level for the qualification and endorse the qualification outcomes.

Section 3: Assessment of applications

Using evaluative methods to make decisions to approve qualifications for listing on the NZQF

NZQA is using an evaluative approach to approve qualifications for listing on the NZQF to ensure that decisions are made in a robust, transparent and defensible way.

Decisions are made using a systematic synthesis process known as 'CORE' which requires that the logic of the decision is systematic, transparent, recorded, and available.

In making decisions, analysts must exercise well-informed, open-minded judgement where both the application and associated qualification are considered on their merits.

The decision to approve a qualification for listing is made using two sets of criteria (rubrics 1 and 2). The first criteria (rubric 1) sets out the expected levels of performance in relation to individual Key Evaluation Questions (KEQs). The second set of criteria (rubric 2) sets out the overall ratings for the application and associated qualification. It is on the basis of these two sets of performance criteria that decisions for approving qualifications are made.

An application for a qualification to be approved may be rated as either excellent or good, in which case a decision is made to approve the qualification for listing. Those applications for a qualification meeting the criteria for 'resubmit' have some significant deficiencies that the developer will have an opportunity to address in a further improved application. Applications for qualifications that do not meet the listing requirements are declined.

Rubric 1: Performance criteria for rating answers to key evaluation questions

	Criteria for rating answers to KEQs
Excellent	Evidence is clearly very strong or exemplary in relation to the question. Any gaps or weaknesses are not significant and are managed effectively.
Good	Evidence is generally strong in relation to the question. No significant gaps or weaknesses, and less significant gaps or weaknesses are mostly managed effectively.
Adequate	Evidence is inconsistent in relation to the question. Some gaps or weaknesses. Meets minimum expectations/requirements as far as can be determined.
Poor	Evidence is unacceptably weak in relation to the question. Does not meet minimum expectations/requirements.

Rubric 2: Performance criteria for rating decisions to approve qualifications

	Performance criteria for rating decisions to list qualifications
Excellent Application approved	The application and underlying qualification: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• are highly effective or exemplary in terms of addressing the listing requirements• comprehensively address the needs of learners/stakeholders• there are no significant gaps or weaknesses
Good Application approved	The application and underlying qualification: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• effectively address the listing requirements• generally addresses the relevant needs of learners/stakeholders• there may be a few gaps or weaknesses but these are not significant
Nearly meets requirements Resubmit to meet listing requirements	The application and underlying qualification: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• inconsistently address the listing requirements• insufficiently addresses the relevant needs of learners/stakeholders• there are some significant gaps or weaknesses
Does not meet listing requirements	The application and underlying qualification: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• does not sufficiently address the listing requirements• does not sufficiently address the needs of learners/stakeholders• has significant gaps or weaknesses

Reaching a decision to approve a qualification

The four steps in CORE (Concentration, Outliers, Reflection, Explanation) are followed sequentially with a record kept of both the individual steps and the final result (the decision).

Each CORE steps relates closely to the requirements for listing a qualification. This means that the answers to the key evaluation questions are reached using rubric 1, bearing in mind all the relevant listing requirements. Once this first step has been finalised, the overall application and qualification are rated using rubric 2.

Step 1: Concentration of ratings

Identify the mode and median ratings on the range. The ratings provide the initial baseline ratings which may be modified through the subsequent CORE steps.

Step 2: Outlier ratings

Identify any outlying levels of really weak or strong evidence, and whether this would cause a shift in the rating. High or very high levels of evidence in some areas do not necessarily compensate for low levels of evidence in others.

Decide the appropriate emphasis to give to the more extreme performance ratings and determine if there is sufficient reason to raise or lower the 'concentration rating' based on consideration of any extreme ratings.

Step 3: Reflection

Reflect on whether the important evidence has been given the appropriate weight. Consider if the emerging decision is credible and reflects common sense. Is there sufficient evidence to reach the decision and is the interpretation of the evidence plausible? and explainable?

Consider whether there are:

- any other reasons for adjusting the rating
- alternative explanations for an unexpected or extreme rating

Step 4: Explanation

Identify the most critical and relevant evidence that led to the decision and which need to be recorded.

The record should contain sufficient information to substantiate the decision reached.

Section 4: Glossary

Term	Description
<i>Achievement standard</i>	A coherent set of learning outcomes and associated assessment criteria, together with technical and management information that supports delivery and assessment; achievement standards specify three different standards of performance and the method of assessment, which may include national external assessment.
<i>Assessment standard</i>	The collective term for unit standards and achievement standards listed on the NZQA Directory of Assessment Standards.
<i>Industry training organisation</i>	A body recognised by the Tertiary Education Commission under the Industry Training Act 1992 as having responsibility for setting standards and arranging the delivery of industry training for a specific industry or area of industry identified in a Tertiary Education Commission gazette notice.
<i>Mandatory stakeholders</i>	<p>All or any of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• industry training organisations with gazetted coverage, other standard setting bodies, and/or regulatory bodies• education providers who are currently (or may potentially be) delivering programmes leading to the award of the qualification. <p>Where there is not a standard setting body, stakeholders must include relevant community, industry, employer or professional groups.</p>
<i>New Zealand certificate or diploma</i>	A qualification that meets the requirements for listing on the NZQF at levels 1-6.
<i>Programme (approved)</i>	<p>An approved programme is a coherent arrangement of learning or training that is based on clear and consistent aims, content, outcomes and assessment practices, which leads to a qualification listed on the NZQF.</p> <p>A “programme” in this document is a “course” in terms of sections 258 and 259 of the Education Act 1989.</p>
<i>Qualification</i>	Formal certification for a given purpose of the achievement of specified learning outcomes to a given standard.
<i>Qualification strand</i>	A specialisation within a qualification that represents a major component of the qualification, and is at the level of the qualification. Strands are documented through strand-specific outcomes in the graduate profile.
<i>Quality assurance body</i>	NZQA or New Zealand Vice-Chancellors’ Committee (also known as Universities New Zealand).
<i>Stakeholders</i>	Individuals, groups, or organisations with an interest (or ‘stake’) in the outcome of a qualification.

Term	Description
<i>Tertiary education provider</i>	<p>All or any of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • an institution (i.e. a polytechnic, institute of technology, technical institute, community college, specialist college, university, wānanga) • a registered establishment (i.e. private training establishment that has been granted registration by NZQA) • a government training establishment • any other person or body that provides, or proposes to provide, tertiary education and that is funded through non-departmental output classes from Vote Education (e.g. adult and community education providers).
<i>Tertiary education organisation</i>	<p>Any of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a tertiary education provider (as above) • an industry training organisation.
<i>Unit Standard</i>	<p>A coherent set of learning outcomes and associated performance criteria, together with technical and management information that supports delivery and assessment. All unit standards are assigned a level and a credit value.</p>